

highest honor of professional teaching excellence. Only 116 of more than 20,000 teachers in the Clark County School District, less than 1 percent, have earned this distinction.

Mrs. Strand has a long and distinguished career as an educator beginning with a Bachelor's Degree from Bemidji State University and a Master's Degree in Secondary Language Arts from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She has been an employee of the Clark County School District for 19 years and has spent the past 8 years at Foothill High School as a member of the English Department. Mrs. Strand is also a co-creator with a fellow teacher of Young Entrepreneur Services, Inc., YES, Inc., is a unique company classroom which has been recognized throughout the district for its unique approach to instructing students. This class applies real world business work situations with the necessities of an English class. Mrs. Strand is known by her colleagues as a tireless worker who is both inspiring and relentless in her pursuit of excellence. Joann has made a profound difference in our community and we are most fortunate to have this leadership which positively impacts student achievement.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Joann Strand. Her efforts to improve the educational experiences of the student at Foothill High School are commendable. I congratulate her on her much deserved recognition and I wish her continued success.

A TRIBUTE TO MS. AURORA  
BROWN

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 26, 2007*

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Brooklyn resident Aurora Brown. Ms. Brown is a native New Yorker and a third generation West Indian who sites education as the strength of her lineage. The Amsted's (family name) were the first black school teachers in Virginia. Ms. Brown taught scholastic and college preparatory classes to youth for employment opportunities. Her students have successfully gone on to colleges and universities such as Morehouse, Spelman and Hampton through her mentoring.

As the Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of S&B Cleaning Services, Inc., Ms. Brown's mission to incorporate was derived from previous experiences of managing several janitorial companies and being employed by federal affiliates including 26 Federal Plaza, New York, New York.

Ms. Brown received The Council City of New York Proclamation Award in December of 2005 and the Partner in Education Award from the Occupational Training Center of New York in June of 2004. Known for her generosity and fairness when dealing with clients and employees, she makes it her business to oversee personally the human resources development of employing disadvantaged and handicapped individuals.

Ms. Brown's work ethic serves as encouragement for women to venture out and become business owners. She states, "through long hours, trials, and tribulations, moments were grueling, but definitely worth the effort." She also admits the company motto was her

driving force when faced with opposition and adversity. Tedious daily functions of operating a business, she makes time to give to her community as a facilitator of public functions, contributing donations, fundraising for the welfare of child care. Ms. Brown, in conjunction with public officials and local affiliates, has donated toys to the Young Minds Daycare Center for the 2005 holiday season. Her personal choice for donations in 2006 was Family Life Foster Care.

Ms. Brown has others to thank in establishing herself, such as family, friends, and associates, but likes to acknowledge that her Executive Vice-President Edwin Santiago is a key component in the developmental operation of rapid growth of this organization; she also takes pride in acknowledging that her employees are the backbone of S&B Cleaning Services, Inc. There is much more you can expect to see that Ms. Brown has yet to reveal. Just like her company motto "There's not much we don't do."

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Ms. Aurora Brown for her accomplishments in business.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Ms. Aurora Brown.

HONORING ANDREW WISE

**HON. CORRINE BROWN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 26, 2007*

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Andrew Wise of the Neighborhood Housing & Development Corporation in Gainesville, Florida.

On Tuesday, March 20, 2007, Andrew Wise was honored with the Dorothy Richardson Awards for Resident Leadership from NeighborWorks America.

Mr. Wise combined his passion for Neighborhood Housing & Development Corporation (NHDC) and his networking skills to recruit a remarkable stream of community, business and educational leaders who have become active in the NHDC organization. NHDC is a non-profit homeownership center that has been in existence since 1982. The organization's goal is to promote and provide decent and affordable housing for low-to-moderate income residents of North Central Florida.

Mr. Wise has been an eloquent NHDC ambassador to the many church, community and civic organizations to which he belongs. Within NHDC, his board tenure and experience have made him the go-to person for new board members—especially community residents—in understanding the array of NHDC programs and their many and varied funding sources. He has been invaluable in helping new members move past this steep learning curve by getting them to focus on the mission of the organization and how its board and staff are so instrumental in transforming lives and uplifting the community.

Created in 1991, the Dorothy Richardson Awards for Resident Leadership celebrate the outstanding contributions of dedicated community leaders across the United States. Each year, the NeighborWorks network honors residents who exemplify the qualities of Dorothy Richardson, a Pittsburgh activist who helped advance the community-based development

movement that informed the formation of the NeighborWorks network.

My congratulations and respect go out to Mr. Wise on his lifetime of work and commitment to earn this award.

HONORING THE CAREER OF  
DENNIS GJERDINGEN

**HON. RICHARD E. NEAL**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 26, 2007*

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, today I wish to recognize and honor a dedicated and innovative educator, Mr. Dennis Gjerdingen, upon his retirement after 26 years as principal of the Clarke School for the Deaf in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Dennis became interested in childhood deafness when, in 1964, he learned that his newborn son was deaf. He trained as a teacher of social studies and English at Minnesota State University, received his masters in Speech and Hearing at Washington University in St. Louis and did post-masters work there in Educational Administration. He spent 14 years at Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis, as a classroom teacher, researcher, associate professor, assistant to the director and as headmaster, before coming to Clarke School for the Deaf in 1981. He is the 6th president in Clarke's 140-year history.

Clarke School is an international leader in teaching listening, speech, language and academic skills to deaf children and assisting families and training professionals to work with them. During his tenure, Mr. Gjerdingen has reorganized the Clarke School and its structure to position Clarke for a rapidly changing future. He designed and administered new Clarke programs, including the creation of the Center for Oral Education on the Northampton campus that helps people of all ages with hearing loss. In the last 10 years, Mr. Gjerdingen spearheaded a strategic plan to expand Clarke to 5 campuses with 4 new schools for young children in Boston, MA, Jacksonville, FL, New York City, and Philadelphia, PA. Clarke School for the Deaf now impacts the lives of more than 10,000 children and adults annually through its educational programs, research, curriculum development and professional training.

The author of more than 30 articles in professional journals, Mr. Gjerdingen is widely recognized as an expert in the field. In 1987 he was appointed by Congress to the Commission on the Education of the Deaf that reported directly to Congress and the President. During this appointment, he helped author a report from which major legislation was adopted. He has also served as president of the International Alexander Graham Bell Association.

It is my great privilege to honor Mr. Gjerdingen for his commitment to providing greater educational opportunities for deaf children and their families and professionals around the country.